

Euroscola Day in the European Parliament Strasbourg 14 December 2018.

And then we all left the parliament filled with new experiences, and ambitions. But wait how did we end up here all of a sudden? It all began in June, when we were notified that there is a possibility of going to Strasbourg. When the new school year started, we gathered the students interested in the EU, held a couple of meetings to ensure everyone was up to date on EU news and info. Our teachers organized the trip.

Soon enough we found ourselves on the night before the journey, when something terrible happened. On December 11th a man shot three people and injured ten more in the Strasbourg Christmas market. We were petrified, but having fully committed ourselves to the following days we knew we couldn't abandon this opportunity.

In the morning, surprisingly, everyone was there on time. We got on the bus and almost immediately fell asleep. Our journey was rather uneventful, not counting our suffering from the bus's temperature that was comparable to a sauna's. We arrived at Hotel Eckwaldblick in Unterharmersbach at midnight when we were greeted with a hearty late-night dinner, after which we went to sleep. The next morning, we set off to see Colmar's city centre which was glittered with Christmas decorations. Our French speaking classmates could finally show us that 4 years and 4 months of French classes were really worth it. Thanks to them we had the chance to experience traditional French pastry such as macrons. We also saw a 700-year-old house which was in a surprisingly good condition. Then we reluctantly left Colmar. We headed towards Freiburg. Here we went sightseeing and shopping for souvenirs. It was here that we almost got lost, however, with the help of our German speaking classmates we were able to ask for directions which lead us back to our teachers. We had to leave soon though, as it was getting dark and we had to get back for dinner. After dinner we sat down and showed what each of us had bought for our loved ones. We knew that we couldn't stay up too late, as tomorrow would be the big day, so we went to bed fairly early.

The next day began with frantic running around and preparing, making sure everyone looked their best. When the time came we sat down on our, now well known, bus seats. Perhaps we only realized where we are going when we gazed upon the building of the European Parliament. I think it hit most of us there that this wasn't just sightseeing anymore, we were going to sit in the same seats as the European politicians, doing what they do. After getting through the entrance we could hardly believe our eyes. The building's walls seemed so high we could hardly see the top. We were quickly invited inside to sit down in an open room with decorated walls. Margaret gave us the schedule for the day. After a while us (the squares), and the diamonds were invited to eat. We met our soon-to-be team members but we did not have much time to idle as we had to leave to enter the hemicycle. Here our speakers, Hanna Susán and Lotti Lámer introduced our school and we attentively listened to the others as they did the same. Having quenched our thirst for knowledge we headed again for the restaurant to have lunch and to fill out the Eurogame with a team of four different nationalities. Then came the serious work. Margaret guided us (the squares) to one of the lower rooms where we could share our ideas about youth employment in the EU. We voted, we debated and we finally put together a report about our progress for Niki to present. Being back in the chamber we met up with our classmates and told them what happened while we were separated. Then the time came to vote on each report. Everyone was nervously awaiting the end of each vote. In the end five of the

six reports were accepted by the chamber leaving most of us feeling accomplished. Sensing the day would end soon, we said our goodbye to the people we had come to know and respect.

And this is where I began the story, us leaving the European Parliament. As I'm writing this we are heading back to Hungary, Eger, telling each other how we felt about our little trip with a big purpose. Overall the general opinion was overwhelmingly positive and we hope this wasn't the last chance to personally see the inside of that certain chamber.

Restás Alexander Dominik (11E)





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